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MESSIAH

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

John Finney, Conductor

Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra and Chorus

December 5–10, 1997 Symphony Hall, Boston

December 12–14 The Shubert Theatre, Boston Season



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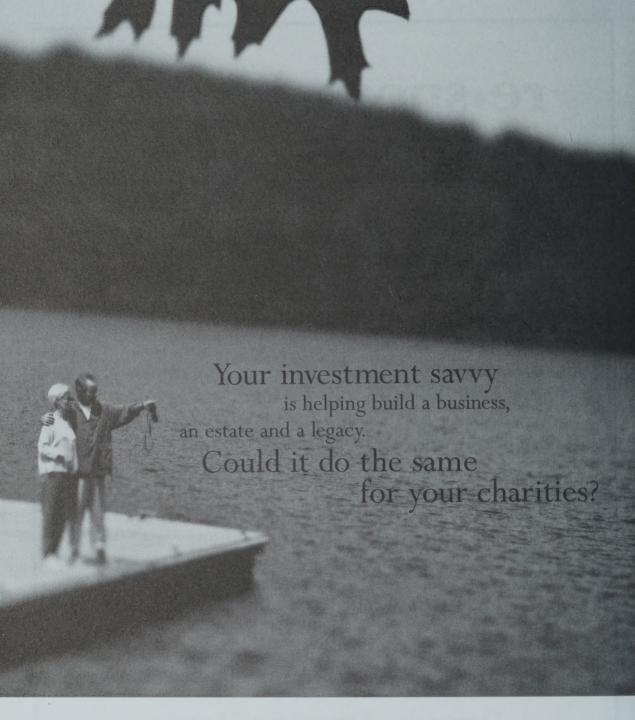
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Symphony, Handel's Messiah, Bach's B-Minor Mass, Mozart's Solemn Vespers, Requiem and Mass in C, Mendelssohn's St. Paul, and the role of the Evangelist Orchestra; Ferrando in Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte with Bel Canto Opera of Rhode in Bach's St. John Passion. A frequent recitalist, Mr. Bauwens has performed Mr. Bauwens has been characterized by Richard Dyer of the Boston Globe as programs including Britten's' Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Vaughn Williams' Harmony. Mr. Bauwens can be heard on Albany Records in a recording of Destino. His concert and oratorio performances include Beethoven's Ninth Alvaro in Boston Academy of Music's concert performance of La Forza Del Ten Blake Songs, Virgil Thomson's Stabat Mater and Handel's In Praise of Leicester in Donizetti's Maria Stuarda with Boston Academy of Music and performance of Verdi's Requiem with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and 'the closest thing to an Italian tenor New England has produced" in over Island. Mr. Bauwens made his Jordan Hall debut in May of 1996 as Don years. Mr. Bauwens' performances this year have included the roles of Pollione in Boston Bel Canto Opera's concert performance of Norma; a Amy Beach's Grand Mass in E Flat.



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Handel & Haydn Society Christopher Hogwood, Artistic Director John Finney, Associate Conductor

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Handel & Haydn Society Christopher Hogwood, Artistic Director John Finney, Associate Conductor 1997–1998 Season

December 5 at 7:30 p.m. • December 6 at 3:00 p.m.

December 7 at 3:00 p.m. • December 10 at 7:30 p.m.

Symphony Hall, Boston

December 12 at 7:30 p.m. • December 13 at 7:30 p.m. • December 14 at 3:00 p.m. The Shubert Theatre, Boston

John Finney, Conductor

George Frideric Handel

MESSIAH

(1753 version)

PART THE FIRST

-Intermission-

PART THE SECOND

-Pause-

PART THE THIRD

Dominique Labelle, soprano Steven Rickards, countertenor (December 5, 6, 7, 10) David Walker, countertenor (December 12, 13, 14) David Gordon, tenor Eric Owens, bass

The audience is politely requested to remain seated during the "Hallelujah" Chorus

These performances of *Messiah* are dedicated in loving memory of Dr. George Geyer

The H&H Chorus is funded in part by a generous gift from the Wintersauce Foundation

JOHN FINNEY, CONDUCTOR



John Finney has been conductor of the Heritage Chorale in Framingham for ten years, and has led that chorus in performances of such major works as Mendelssohn's Elijah, and most recently Verdi's Requiem. As Director of the University Chorale of Boston College, he has performed with the Chorale in concert tours locally and throughout the world, including Orff's Carmina Burana, Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, and several American premieres. He founded the Boston Early Music Festival Chorus in 1987, and has been Director of Music for the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church since 1984. Mr. Finney has been H&H Chorusmaster since 1990, and was named Associate Conductor in 1992, directing H&H's Jordan Hall performances. He has been instrumental in maintaining the extraordinary level of quality of the H&H Chorus, which the Boston Globe has called "one of the glories of Boston's

musical life." Mr. Finney is widely praised for his harpsichord and organ playing; he holds degrees in organ performance from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and The Boston Conservatory. He is on the faculty of The Boston Conservatory, and teaches at the Academy for Early Music in Bressanone, Italy. He has recorded for Denon, Decca, and Nonesuch.

Dominique Labelle, Soprano



Soprano Dominique Labelle is known for the luminous beauty of her voice, her committed stage presence, and the impeccable musicianship that she brings to her appearances in opera, concert, and recital. She was last seen with H&H performing Mozart's Coronation Mass and Exsultate, jubilate in 1996. She has appeared with numerous symphony orchestras, including Boston, Houston, Montreal, and New York, among others, and has sung under such conductors as Charles Dutoit, Nicholas McGegan, Seiji Ozawa, and Franz Welser-Möst. Her operatic appearances have included leading roles with The Boston Lyric Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and Vancouver Opera. Last season, her engagements included Haydn's Creation with the Cincinnati Symphony; Messiahwith the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra conducted by Bobby McFerrin; and Elijah with Robert Shaw and the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall.

A native of Montreal, Canada, Ms. Labelle attended Boston University on a Dean's Scholarship, and was a Vocal Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. She was a winner of the 1989 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition, and in 1996 received a George London Foundation Award.

STEVEN RICKARDS, COUNTERTENOR



Steven Rickards is regarded as one of America's finest countertenors. He has appeared with Music of the Baroque, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Tafelmusik, and Chanticleer, among others and has performed many of the works Bach, including the Mass in A with Vocalisten Frankfurt; St. John Passion in Regensburg, Munich, and Brixen; and the Christmas Oratorio with the Minnesota Bach Society and the Smithsonian Institution. He has also performed Bach's Mass in B Minor at the Mostly Mozart Festival and with the Bach Concert on an Australian tour; as well as St. Matthew Passion at the Royal Albert Hall, all under conductor Joshua Rifkin. With lutenist Dorothy Linell, Mr. Rickards has toured throughout the United States and Central America, and served as artist-in-residence at the University of California at Santa Barbara and the University of Costa Rica. Mr. Rickards is the first countertenor to

receive a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Indiana University. In 1981, he received a Fulbright-Hayes Scholarship and a Rotary International Grant for continued studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

David Walker, Countertenor



Countertenor David Walker is praised for the elegance and feeling he brings to his performances in opera, oratorio, and orchestral works. His highly acclaimed Satirino in Glimmerglass Opera's 1996 production of Cavalli's *La Calisto* was recently published by *BBC Music Magazine*. He has sung Orfeo in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* at Florida State University (FSU), and he appeared as Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Aspen Opera Theater. Mr. Walker's orchestral and oratorio engagements include Purcell's Verse Anthems with the Boston Early Music Festival, Carissimi's *Jephte* and Mozart's "Coronation" Mass with the Winter Park Bach Festival, Scarlatti's *Salve Regina* with the Orlando Philharmonic, and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Florida Symphony Orchestra. He has performed Ottone in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* with Orlando Opera and the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* with the Boston Early

Music Festival. He has appeared on several recordings, including one of Gesualdo masses with Cantores Musicae Antiquae. Mr. Walker was a Young American Artist at Glimmerglass Opera in 1996 and a First Place Winner in the NATS Competition in 1993 and 1994, and holds a graduate degree from FSU.

David Gordon, Tenor



David Gordon has appeared as a soloist with virtually every major North American symphony orchestra, and with orchestras and festivals on four continents. Hailed as one of the world's great Bach tenors, he has won special praise for his elegant and communicative portrayal of Bach's Evangelist roles in hundreds of performances, including the St. John Passion with Christopher Hogwood and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has appeared with the orchestras of Los Angeles, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Boston, Berlin, and the San Francisco Opera. He has sung *Messiah* with the Atlanta Symphony led by Robert Shaw, and performed in the world premiere of Charles Fussell's *Fünf Goethe-Lieder*, written for him and the Seattle Symphony. Mr. Gordon's diverse discography includes the Bach *Magnificat* with Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony; Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with the Saint Paul Chamber

Orchestra under Christopher Hogwood; and *Dreames and Imaginations*, a collection of Elizabethan songs for tenor and consort of viols.

ERIC OWENS, BASS



Eric Owens's opera roles include Frere Laurent in Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Mephistopheles in *Faust*, and Angelotti in *Tosca* with the Houston Grand Opera; and Lord Talbot in Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco* and Alidoro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Mr. Owens made his Carnegie Hall debut in Handel's *Messiah* with the Oratorio Society of New York, and also performed there in the roles of the High Priest in Massenet's *Herodiade* and Sir Walton in *I Puritani*, both with the Opera Orchestra of New York. He is a winner of the 1996 Placido Domingo Competition, the 1996 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and the 1995 Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition. His other awards include First Prizes in the MacAllister Awards Voice Competition, New York's Opera Index Career Grant Auditions, the Palm Beach Opera National

Voice Competitions, and the Mario Lanza Voice Competition. A native of Philadelphia, Mr. Owens studied voice at Temple University where he received his undergraduate degree in vocal performance. He received his Master of Music Degree in Opera from The Curtis Institute of Music.

HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

The Handel & Haydn Society is America's premier chorus and period orchestra. Under the artistic direction of renowned conductor Christopher Hogwood since 1986, H&H has become a leader in historically informed performance. Each H&H concert is distinguished by the use of instruments. techniques, and performance styles typical of the period in which the music was composed. Founded in Boston in 1815, H&H is the oldest continuously performing arts organization in the country, with a long tradition of musical excellence. In the nineteenth century, the Society gave the American premieres of several Baroque and Classical works, including Handel's Messiah (1818), which H&H has performed every year since 1854, Samson (1845), Solomon (1855), and Israel in Egypt (1859), and Bach's Mass in B Minor (1887) and St. Matthew Passion (1889). In recent years, H&H has achieved widespread acclaim through recordings on the London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre label, national broadcasts, and performances across North America. H&H made its European debut in 1996 with a fully staged production of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice with Mark Morris and the Mark Morris Dance Group at the Edinburgh International Festival in Scotland. In addition to performances at Boston's Symphony Hall, H&H also offers concerts at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, most often under the direction of Associate Conductor John Finney. H&H's innovative educational outreach program brings the joy of classical music to more than 7,000 students every year in 47 schools throughout Massachusetts.

WHY NOT STAND?

The "Hallelujah" chorus often inspires people to stand, says H&H Artistic Director Christopher Hogwood. The custom of rising for the opening of the "Hallelujah" chorus, however, which did not occur in Handel's time, often prevents listeners from hearing some of his finest work.

Part Two of *Messiah* is a masterpiece of construction, not least the gathering momentum and constant sense of surprise during the last fifteen minutes. From the bass outburst of "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" through to the final declaration that God will break his enemies "like a potter's vessel: Hallelujah," the sequence of mood and tempi is wonderfully sustained.

Nothing is more telling of Handel's dramatic mastery than the opening bars of the "Hallelujah" chorus. It begins without demonstration—no trumpets, drums, or even voices; simply the sound of the string orchestra. When the chorus does enter, with demonstrations of how diversely the word "Hallelujah" can be accented, the trumpets and drums are still unheard. Handel is incorporating in this finale all the

intimations of the gradual spread of gospel jubilation—from initial subdued word-lessness to full triumph.

Since there is no indication at the start of the chorus that anything unusual is about to happen, the ritual of hundreds of listeners suddenly gathering and rising to their feet manages to obliterate those first important orchestral bars, and there must be many first-time listeners who never manage to hear the opening of the chorus and must consequently still be wondering what it is all about!

With the help of H&H audiences, we can return Handel's masterpiece to being a living, surprising, and "new-minted" experience. It simply means restraining your enthusiasm for a few moments more, letting Handel have his way, and then springing up after the final chord.

—Christopher Hogwood

H&H ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Daniel Stepner, concertmaster
Jane Starkman
Lena Wong
Etsuko Ishizuka
Sue Rabut Cartwright
Mary Hoyt
Anne Marie Chubet
Dana Maiben (12/5–10)

Kinloch Earle (12/12-14)

VIOLIN II

Judith Eissenberg*
Robert Mealy
Judith Gerratt
Guiomar Turgeon (12/5–13)
Barbara Englesberg (12/14)
Beth Abbate
Julia McKenzie

VIOLA

David Miller* Laura Jeppesen Scott Woolweaver Susan Seeber

CELLO

Loretta O'Sullivan* Alice Robbins Reinmar Seidler

BASS

Michael Willens* *Amelia Peabody chair* Anne Trout

OBOE

Stephen Hammer*
chair funded in part by
Dr. Michael Fisher Sandler
Lani Spahr
Virginia Brewer
William Thauer

BASSOON

Marilyn Boenau* Byron Rakitzis

TRUMPET

John Thiessen* (12/5–10) Jesse Levine* (12/12–14) Vincent Monaco (12/12–14)

TIMPANI

William Hanley

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James David Christie

*principal

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TENOR James DeSelms Stuart Grey Murray Kidd Christopher Marrion Terrence McKinney Arthur Rishi Ryan Turner

DASS
Peter Gibson
Herman Hildebrane
Kyle Hoepner
Brett Johnson
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HANDEL'S 1753 VERSION OF MESSIAH

Watkins Shaw

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) composed Messiah in just twenty-four days in 1741, using a libretto given to him by Charles Jennens. conducted the premiere of Messiah on April 13, 1742 in Dublin. He then gave the first performance in England on March 23, 1743 at Covent Garden. From 1750 until his death, Handel conducted Messiah annually at London's Foundling Hospital, and adapted the score numerous times to accommodate the available singers and players for each performance. The composer's frequent adaptations leave many versions of the great oratorio to explore. H&H has been performing these versions in chronological order for the past several years, and this year presents the version from 1753.

t appears, for reason not fully understood, that at the end of the 1740-41 London season, Handel, by then fifty-six and at the height of his powers, was unsettled and discouraged. This seems partly because, though enjoying the support and admiration of a substantial and influential section of the public, he was subject to some unspecified but apparently bitter criticism from a different group. Among his friends there was a strong belief that this season was to be his last and that he might even withdraw to his native Germany. It was at this juncture that his wealthy, learned, and leisured friend Charles Jennens prepared an assemblage of scripture texts to form a libretto for a work for solo singers and chorus to be called Messiah, which was ready by July 10, and was almost certainly in the composer's hands by early August.

Fortunately, whatever his personal mood, Handel's powers as a composer had not deserted him, and, seized by this text, he set to work in his house in Brook Street on August 22 and completed it on September 14, 1741. Twenty-four days is

certainly a very short time for a work of this size, but it must not be misinterpreted, as it was by our nineteenth- and early twentieth-century forebears, as evidence of some special divine dispensation on account of the sacred words. For one thing, the raw material of four substantial choruses lay already to hand. For another, the orchestral scoring is of the lightest (strings only—with oboes implied plus very sparing use of trumpets), and a good deal of it capable of being put on paper speedily in abbreviated form, which his transcribers would understand. Most of all, Handel was a rapid composer, well illustrated by the fact that, after a fortnight's respite, he set to work to compose Samson, a longer and somewhat more elaborate work, which he finished on October 29, a matter of some thirty days only.

Meanwhile, another incentive had reached him, in the form of an indication that a season of concerts by him in Dublin would be welcomed by influential people, and on November 18 he arrived there in furtherance of this project. So it came about (to the disappointment of Jennens) that the first performance of this celebrated work took place in the Irish capital as the climax of his season on April 13, 1742, when its reception was so rapturous that a repeat performance was called for in June. When it was first heard in London, in the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden in March 1743, its reception was muted, largely because of the association of such a project with the profane surroundings of the theater, an objection Handel had unsuccessfully tried to meet in advance by announcing it not as Messiah but A New Sacred Oratorio. But from 1750 these objections had been overcome, especially as a result of Handel's generosity in giving performance for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, from which time its unique celebrity has been unassailed, giving it the status somewhat of an icon (so to speak) in the national artistic culture.

HANDEL'S ORATORIO VERSUS OPERA

There was virtually no precedent for the musical setting of such a scriptural libretto, extensive, non-liturgical, devoid of narrative and *dramatis* personnae, and Handel was neither primarily nor

predominantly a composer of religious music. It is a measure of his sense of fitness that he was able to forge a construction out of ingredients designed for other purposes in such a way that the result has come to seem not so much original as inevitable and unquestioned, and that their disposition, which might easily have become a mere miscellany, has a remarkable quality of integrity. (It is, incidentally, in the present state of knowledge, impossible to say whether Jennens himself

indicated which movements were to be for solo voice and which for chorus, though it is probable that he did. Not all of them are self-determining.)

Prominent among those ingredients was the operatic aria, by which a character expressed personal reactions. In Messiah Handel found this apt for the expression of generalized emotions. There had come to be an accepted classification of such arias, and though Handel's large imagination was not to be confined by stereotypes, these can clearly be discerned in highly expressive forms throughout. Ex-

amples other than those cited will readily be identified. There is the smooth aria cantabile ("He shall feed his flock"); the brilliant aria di bravura ("Rejoice greatly" and "Thou shalt break them"); the curiously named aria di mezzo carattere, slow, deeply felt, and richly harmonized ("He was despised"); the aria infuriata or "rage aria" ("Why do the nations"); the aria di imitazione ("The trumpet shall sound"); and also an instance of the rare aria all'unisono, in which the instrumental accompaniment proceeds in unison or octaves with the voice and of which "The people that walked in darkness" is a particularly well-judged example.

The other main ingredient of opera was recitative—an unmelodic form of musically heightened speech, one note to one syllable, simply accompanied by punctuating chords on the harpsichord or organ, employed for the direct

dialogue between one character and another. Though applicable to Handel's dramatic oratorios, such as *Joshua* or *Samson*, this was hardly appropriate at all to this libretto, though Handel avails himself of it a few times to cover a little neutral ground. But his à proposuse of it when the Angel of the Lord speaks to the shepherds ("And the Angel said unto them") is a fine example of his quite personal power of endowing even this conventional form with a sense of expressive eloquence.

"... the level of sublimity
in the music of Messiah
is very high indeed,
justifying (it need not be
said) its rank among the
major masterpieces of
sacred music."

In opera there was, however, a much less used type of recitative, with orchestral accompaniment to reinforce its character, recitativo accompagnato. For his purposes in Messiah Handel has recourse to a strongly developed form of this, in which, now and again, he can depart from the dry principle of one note to a syllable, and use his orchestra to add expression without adopting all the formal procedures of aria form. There are some striking examples: "Thus saith the Lord," "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth," "All they

that see him laugh him to scorn." Most remarkable of all is "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart" beneath sustained strings using, for its day, an exceedingly unusual series of harmonies against which the composer is able to project movingly the lonely agony of the Son of Man. This must surely claim to be among the most wonderfully expressive examples of *recitativo accompagnato* in all music. The distinction which this kind of movement gives to *Messiah* in Handel's treatment is too often overlooked.

In opera there was only a minimum call for choruses, and even (apart from *Israel in Egypt*, an altogether exceptional instance) in Handel's oratorios of a narrative type there was relatively little scope for them. But here, without personages necessarily calling for solo utterance, the way is wide open, and Handel furnishes an ample variety, one of the special glories of the work. There are

the two great ceremonial examples at the end of Parts Two and Three, "Hallelujah" and "Worthy is the Lamb," and with these, though lower in tone, may be grouped "And the glory of the Lord" and "Lift up your heads," both of them so constructed that Handel could later use the music in concertos for two wind groups and strings. In sharp contrast is the generally light texture of "And he shall purify," "For unto us a child is born," "His yoke is easy" and "All we, like sheep," which is accounted for by the origin of the bulk of their material in the form of secular Italian duets. Ouite individual in the present context are "And with his stripes we are healed," an example of neutral ecclesiastical counterpoint, and "He trusted in God," which bears some relation to the turba, or wild mob utterance, of Passion music. Then there are numerous shorter examples of diverse emotional impact. Outstanding among these are "Behold, the Lamb of God," "Surely, he hath borne our griefs," "The Lord gave the word" and "Let us break their bonds asunder," veritable mood poems, each striking to the heart of its text with absolute directness and without formal working out. In a class by itself is the deliberate adoption of slight archaism for "Since by man came death" and "For as in Adam all die" against the emphatic, strongly diatonic affirmation of "By man came also" and "Even so in Christ."

Handel's Revisions

When Handel had dated the last page of his original manuscript, that was not the end of the matter. Even before setting out for Dublin he made a small but important emendation to "Thus saith the Lord," and the process of amendment, extensive redrafting and even complete recomposition of several movements occupied him until, in the early 1750s, his eyesight failed.

The intricate question of the chronology and occasions of these changes does not affect our appreciation of the work, but a general survey of them gives us some insight into Handel's work. Two are mere expedients to meet emergencies, and some others are relatively unimportant as mere transpositions to suit alternative singers, but one of these is worth note. At first the sequence "He shall feed his flock ... Come unto him" was set entirely for alto voice. Then the composer transposed it up for soprano. Thirdly, the idea struck him of leaving the first part to the alto and

allotting the second to the soprano in the higher key; whatever he may have had in mind, there is an undeniable thrill in this, the version most usually performed today, at the entry of the more ringing soprano timbre at "Come unto him."

Many of Handel's reconsiderations show his concern for tautness of structure and directness of impact. Thus the original opening of "Thus saith the Lord" is perfectly acceptable, and few would be inclined to criticize it, yet by a deft and masterly excision he achieves the forceful impact of the words of the Lord now familiar to us. In the same way he eliminated some bits of flabbiness in the orchestral part of "Ev'ry valley." Bigger changes will account for certain differences now found between one performance and another today. The instance of "Rejoice greatly" is particularly fascinating. Originally this was long and sprawling, though well within convention, but greatly to its benefit Handel removed some redundancy and deftly and economically reshaped the whole. To examine the marks on the manuscript of his original version is to look over the shoulder of a great master as he gives himself, as it were, a lesson in composition. (Later he made a further change but without altering the structure. Retaining exactly the same accompanying harmonies, he changed the compound time, triple lilt of the voice and violin parts to achieve the greater brilliance of semiquavers in simple time, while skilfully maintaining the general melodic contour.) One very big change was in quite a different direction. Originally "But who may abide" had been a fairly equable, gently moving but acceptable affair for a bass voice. In 1750, stimulated presumably by the novel availability of the castrato Gaetano Guadagni, he almost entirely recomposed this, retaining his initial idea, but going on to introduce the two telling bravura interpolations now well known at the words "For he is like a refiner's fire." There are no fewer than three versions of "Thou art gone up on high," but rather curiously these do not differ greatly in style or artistic shaping, although one of them was composed with Guadagni in mind.

Not all his second thoughts were unerring in judgment. An uninspired, conventional setting of "And lo, the angel of the Lord" gravely damaged the beauty of the scene with the shepherds, and he recognized this by restoring the original in later performances. Specially curious is the treatment

of the sequence "How beautiful are the feet ... Their sound is gone out." There are as many as five, widely different versions of this. What can have been the cause of these doubts and vacillations can hardly be guessed at: there was evidently some unusual inhibition in his approach to the text, and also, probably, some dissatisfaction on the part of Jennens. One may accept as the best solution what he settled for in his charitable performances for the Foundling Hospital, namely the original soprano aria for the opening words ("How beautiful ..."), changing to a short chorus for "Their sound is gone out," the version now standard.

In general, the level of sublimity in the music of *Messiah* is very high indeed, justifying (it need not be said) its rank among the major masterpieces of sacred music. All his great imaginative strokes relate to some picture, event or action (the vignette of the shepherds, for instance, or "For behold, darkness," "he was bruised" and "Thou shalt break them"), or to profound empathy with human anguish, physical or mental, to solace, to joy and (as supremely in "I know that my Redeemer liveth") to personal conviction. Reverting to the four choruses adapted from secular duets, it is

significant that when, as he does in each instance, he introduces some original material, in three striking cases these occur at some more evocative, positive words ("That they may offer unto the Lord," "Wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God," and, most powerful of all after the wandering and turning of the sheep, "And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.") Does it not then appear that, whatever more sophisticated, philosophical or theological considerations may have been in the mind of Jennens, Handel viewed the text of *Messiah* through the prism of a large, generous and noble humanity, rather than through dogma, mysticism, or metaphysics?

Be this as it may, Handel's imagination has nearly everywhere achieved such a remarkable fusion between his music and the scripture words that the result, to those familiar with it, may be said to have become part of the very exegesis of the text. And indeed it may be prophesied not so much that Handel's *Messiah* will continue to be loved wherever the Authorized Version of the Bible is known, as that, wherever Handel's music is known and loved, phrases from that version will remain familiar after the great bulk of it has become archaic.

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MESSIAH, A SACRED ORATORIO

1753 version

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PART THE FIRST

SINFONY

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (TENOR)

Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah XL, 1-3)

Aria (Tenor)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight and the rough places plain. (Isaiah XL, 4)

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. And all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah XL, 5)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (BASS)

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while, and I will shake the heav'ns and the earth, the sea, and the dry land, all nations I'll shake; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple; even the messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in, behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. (Haggai II, 6–7; Malachi III, I)

ARIA (ALTO)

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. (Malachi III, 2)

CHORUS

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Malachi III, 3)

RECITATIVE (ALTO)

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, "God with us". (Isaiah VII, 14; Matthew I, 23)

Aria and Chorus (Alto)

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion get Thee up into the high mountain; O Thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem lift up Thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! Arise, shine, for Thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon Thee. (Isaiah XL, 9; LX, I)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (BASS)

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon Thee, and His glory shall be seen upon Thee. And the Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising. (Isaiah IX, 2-3)

ARIA (BASS)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. And they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isaiah IX, 2)

Chorus

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called: Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace! (Isaiah IX, 6)

PIFA

RECITATIVE (SOPRANO)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (Luke II, 8)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (SOPRANO)

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. (Luke 11, 9)

RECITATIVE (SOPRANO)

And the angel said unto them: Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. (Luke II, 10–II)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (SOPRANO)

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heav'nly host, praising God, and saying: (Luke 11, 13)

CHORUS

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men. (Luke II, 14)

ARIA (SOPRANO)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King com'th unto thee. He is the righteous Savior, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. (Zechariah IX, 9–10)

RECITATIVE (ALTO)

Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. (Isaiah xxxv, 5-6)

ARIA (ALTO AND SOPRANO)

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto Him, all ye that labor, come unto Him all ye that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for he is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Isaiah XI, II; Matthew XI, 28–29)

Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light. (Matthew XI, 30)

PART THE SECOND

Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1, 29)

ARIA (ALTO)

He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: he hid not his face from shame and spitting. (Isaiah LIII, 3: I, 6)

CHORUS

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. (Isaiah LIII, 4–5)

CHORUS

And with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah LIII, 5)

CHORUS

All we like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned ev'ry one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah LIII, 6)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (TENOR)

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: (Psalm XXII, 7)

CHORUS

He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if he delight in Him. (Psalm XXII, 8)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (TENOR)

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness; He looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him. (Psalm LXIX, 21)

ARIA (TENOR)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. (Lamentations 1, 2)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (SOPRANO)

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken. (Isaiah LIII, 8)

ARIA (SOPRANO)

But thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. (Psalm XVI, 10)

CHORUS

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts: He is the King of Glory. (Psalm xxv, 7–10)

RECITATIVE (TENOR)

Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? (Hebrews 1, 5)

Chorus

Let all the angels of God worship Him. (Hebrews 1, 6)

ARIA (ALTO)

Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Psalm LXVIII, 18)

CHORUS

The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers. (Psalm LXVIII, II)

ARIA (SOPRANO)

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. (Romans x, 15)

CHORUS

Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. (Romans X, 18)

ARIA (BASS)

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and His anointed. (Psalm II, I-2)

CHORUS

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (Psalm II, 3)

RECITATIVE (TENOR)

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn, the Lord shall have them in derision. (Psalm 11, 4)

ARIA (TENOR)

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Psalm II, 9)

CHORUS

Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah.

(Revelation XIX, 6; XI, 15; XIX, 16)

PART THE THIRD

ARIA (SOPRANO)

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. (Job XIX, 25-26; I Corinthians XV, 20)

CHORUS

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (I Corinthians XV, 21, 22)

RECITATIVE, ACCOMPANIED (BASS)

Behold I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be chang'd, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. (I Corinthians xv, 51-52)

ARIA (BASS)

The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be rais'd incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (I Corinthians xv, 52-54)

RECITATIVE (ALTO)

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallow'd up in victory. (I Corinthians xv, 54)

DUET (ALTO AND TENOR)

O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. (I Corinthians xv, 55-57)

CHORUS

But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians xv, 55-57)

ARIA (ALTO)

If God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us. (Romans VIII, 31, 33-34)

CHORUS

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honor, glory, and pow'r be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. (Revelation v, 12-13)

CHORUS

Amen.

Dr. George E. Geyer

1925-1997

These performances of Messiah are lovingly dedicated to the memory of Dr. George Geyer.

Dr. Geyer's official biography will tell you that he was born in Saginaw, Michigan in 1925; that he attended Drexel Institute of Technology and Rutgers University, and graduated from Tufts University School of Medicine. There followed a long and rewarding practice of pediatric medicine, with a private practice in Walpole and a position as Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at Tufts University School of Medicine. He lived in Walpole with his wife Conchita and was the proud father of Karen and Karl.

George's professional life, however, was just one aspect of an extraordinary man, and reveals little of his enormous contributions to the Handel & Haydn Society. His association with the Society began in 1945, when he first auditioned for the chorus, and continued until his death this November, a total of 52 years of service. In addition to lending his fine voice to the bass section, he served in a governance role. First elected to the Board of Governors in 1961, he became President the following year, a position he held until 1974, and one to which he returned in 1981–1983.

The Society's greatest advocate, he passionately and wholeheartedly devoted himself to H&H, and every battle Handel & Haydn fought became his personal battle as well. When a Boston music critic began a review of the 1964 *Messiah* performances with "Late in the summer of 1741, Handel wrote a sacred oratorio called *Messiah*. Since then, some devastating things have happened to it, and one of them was certainly the performance in Symphony Hall on Sunday afternoon," George embarked on a vigorous letter writing campaign, penning many thousands of words in defense of the Society. At the same time, realizing that H&H had to move with the times, he led the search that brought Thomas Dunn to the Society as Artistic Director in 1967. He shepherded that relationship for nearly eighteen years, guiding the evolution of Handel & Haydn from an amateur group to its current professional status.

His wisdom, musicianship and steadfast involvement were recognized in 1990, when he was awarded the Handel & Haydn Society Medal of Honor. Last year, in honor of his tireless efforts to promote quality choral music, the Society created an endowment fund that bears Dr. Geyer's name. The George Geyer Fund for Artistic Excellence will support a variety of artistic initiatives, enabling H&H to hire the most talented singers and instrumentalists for the Chorus and Orchestra, and to engage important guest conductors and soloists for future seasons.

A true renaissance man, George had wide ranging interests, and was always ready to talk about those interests with anyone who cared to listen. He had a keen sense of humor, and was a devoted and caring friend to many. But most of all, he loved music, and was at his most eloquent describing a piece or performance he particularly loved. At his bedside shortly before his death, he had a box full of cassettes of H&H performances, in order to play (and critique) his favorites.

The Handel & Haydn Society owes George Geyer an enormous debt of gratitude for his lifetime of service. His wit, grace, and passion will be sorely missed.

Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder Und rufen dir im Grabe zu: Ruhe sanfte, George, sanfte ruh! We lay ourselves with weeping prostrate And cry to thee within the tomb: Rest gently, George, gently rest!

(From the final chorale of Bach's St. Matthew Passion)

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The Handel & Haydn Society is grateful to the following individuals, corporations, foundations, and agencies for their generous contributions to the Annual Fund. Such ongoing support is crucial to H&H's artistic growth and financial stability. This roster acknowledges gifts received between October 15, 1996 and November 20, 1997. If you wish to make a donation to the Society or to learn more about the exclusive benefits available to Conductor's Circle members, please call Michael E. Jendrysik, Director of Annual Giving, at (617) 262-1815.

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In March 1997, an endowment of \$150,000 was established to honor the exceptional dedication of Dr. George Geyer, Governor Emeritus, who has promoted efforts to advance the artistic dimensions of the Handel & Haydn Society for more than fifty consecutive years. Income from this fund will be used to enhance the quality of H&H performances. H&H acknowledges the generous commitments made to honor Dr. Geyer by the following individuals:

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Friday, January 30, 1998 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, February 1 at 3 p.m.

Jazz legend Dave Brubeck and his sons play alongside H&H's period orchestra, conducted by Christopher Hogwood, in a program alternating jazz and Baroque music.

HANDEL: JULIUS CAESAR

Friday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, March 29 at 2:00 p.m. Christopher Hogwood, conductor Sylvia McNair, Cleopatra Graham Pushee, Caesar Stephanie Blythe, Cornelia Marguerite Krull, Sesto Drew Minter, Tolomeo Daniel Lichti, Achilla Carl Strygg, Nireno Concert performances of Handel's most popular opera Julius Caesar (Giulio Cesare in Egitto)

MOZART, LEVIN & HAYDN

Friday, April 17 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 19 at 3 p.m. Christopher Hogwood, conductor Robert Levin, harpsichord and fortepiano Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 1 in F, K. 37 Haydn: Symphony No. 96 in D, "The Miracle" Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 27 in B flat, K. 595 At New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall

BACH: CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

Thursday, December 18 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 21 at 3 p.m. John Finney, director The first three festive cantatas of J.S. Bach's sacred oratorio:

Jauchzet, frohlocket Und es waren Hirten Herrscher des Himmels

VENETIAN CHURCH MUSIC

Friday, February 20 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, February 22 at 8 p.m. Christopher Hogwood, conductor Christopher Hogwood's debut in the recently restored Jordan Hall, featuring:

Vivaldi: *Gloria*, RV 589 Credo, RV 591 *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* (Psalm 116)

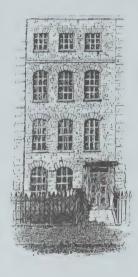
CLASSICAL CHAMBER MUSIC

Friday, April 3 at 8 p.m.
John Finney, piano and leader
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Mozart: Flute Quartet in D, K. 285
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PLEASE HELP US SAVE HANDEL'S HOUSE



The Handel House Trust was established in 1991 with the objective of saving the house in Brook Street, Mayfair—where Handel lived for thirty-six years, composed *Messiah*, and where he died—and creating in it a museum to honor the composer.

With help from the Heritage Lottery Fund, a few large gifts, and a very large number of small ones, the Trust completed the purchase of a 999-year lease before the end of 1996.

The Handel House Museum will be a musical center, with a recital hall to seat seventy and a music room upstairs, where Handel himself played through his scores and directed rehearsals. There will be a dedicated education room, a library, and a museum shop.

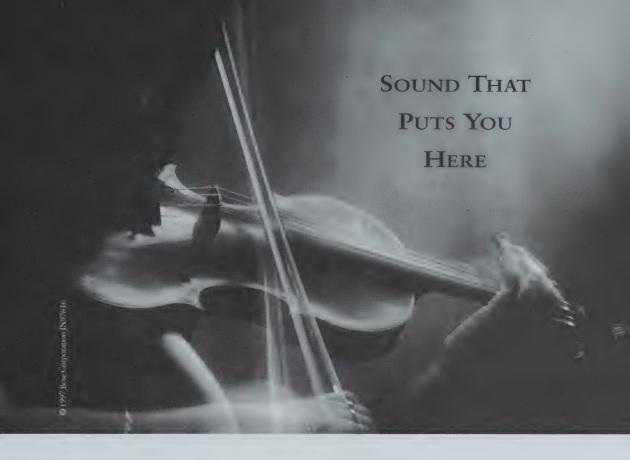
The Trust has already begun a detailed archival and "archaeological" examination of Handel's house to learn its full structural history. Work will be done over the next two years, with Julian Harrap a leading authority on the preservation and restoration of Georgian buildings, as architect, to recreate Handel's own living environment as part of a museum designed to honor his memory and to evoke the man, his life, and his times.

These ambitious goals can be accomplished only if Handelians and music-lovers around the world provide generous support toward the Trust's objective of creating a worthy, modern museum. A sum of \$1.2 million must be raised by April 1, 1998. If we fail, Handel's house becomes a shop with offices above. Help us seize this unique opportunity—it will not come again.

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Please help us create the Handel House Museum. Gifts (including gifts in kind) will be gratefully received; larger ones will be acknowledged in permanent form within the museum. Copies of a brochure with information about giving are available at this performance or from:

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H&H AND HISTORICALLY INFORMED PERFORMANCE

The Messiah you are hearing is an example of a historically informed performance. This style of musical performance— "HIP," as it has become known—arose from the work of a series of innovative musical thinkers in this century who began asking challenging questions of current performance practices, such as "If the piano was not available to Bach in his time, why do we use it now when performing his works?" The result of such questions was a completely new-and old-way of performing the music of Baroque and Classical composers. HIP performances give audiences the opportunity to hear this music as it might have sounded to early listeners: performed on the instruments and with the performance methods available to the composers in their time.

Christopher Hogwood was an active proponent of the HIP movement in the 1970s, and continues as one of its leaders today. He defines its purpose as "introducing music of the Classical and Baroque styles in a historically scrupulous way." In addition to using historical instruments and appropriately sized ensembles, HIP performances use the most up-to-date scholarship and newly edited scores, enabling audiences to hear not only the unique textures afforded by period instruments, but also appropriate tempos and dynamics. Mr. Hogwood is also interested in historical concert context, studying which specific works might have been performed together on an actual concert program of the time, and in what sequence. H&H concerts often reflect this historical format, and might begin and end with the movements of one Mozart symphony, for example.

The H&H Period Orchestra

Since Christopher Hogwood became Artistic Director in 1986, H&H has given historically informed performances on period instruments, and under his guidance, has become one of the nation's most respected period orchestras. Several of the instruments you see in the H&H orchestra were actually built in the Baroque or Classical periods; others are replicas designed after specific historical models. One visible distinction of a period orchestra is the woodwind section, where

the instruments are indeed made of wood (not entirely the case in a modern orchestra—think of the modern flute). Brass instruments from the Baroque period have simpler lines and no valves; look at the trumpets in this performance, for example. Differences you can hear more than see include gut strings instead of steel in the string section, and instruments tuned to lower pitches.

As Mr. Hogwood explains, the difference between music played on original and on modern instruments can be understood only through the listening experience. "Modern instruments, which were built to be used in large auditoriums, are deluxe machines; they are rich, full, bright. Original instruments sound sweeter, leaner, less heavy. Often, they are more transparent, more articulate, more rhythmic. What is significant is that the sound they produce enables us to approach more accurately the style and sound of the classical composers. We follow their conventions; we do not force them to follow ours."

The H&H Chorus

Founded as a choral society in 1815, the Handel & Haydn Society has a distinguished choral tradition. The face of the chorus, however, has changed dramatically over its 180-year history. In the nineteenth century, the Society's large, amateur chorus had a prominent role in Boston's musical life, and was responsible for the American premieres of several important choral works, including Messiah in 1818 and several other Handel oratorios, Verdi's Requiem in 1878, and Bach's St. Matthew Passion in 1879. The chorus also reflected a nineteenth-century fascination with large-scale performing forces; in 1857, for example, the Society gave a performance with the largest chorus in its history-700 singers. A century later, as H&H was observing its 150th anniversary in the mid-1960s, the Society moved to a fully professional chorus, and smaller, authentically sized ensembles. Now made up of a corps of talented professional singers, H&H's chorus is considered one of this country's outstanding choral groups. The 33-member chorus in this performance reflects the size of the choral forces singing Messiah in Handel's time.

"It's an absolutely monumental work and it's appropriate for Christmas, it's appropriate for Easter, it's appropriate for every time of the year and it somehow embraces the whole of humanity and gives us a good message that makes us feel good about ourselves and about the world."

–Jane Glover, Guest Conductor of H&H's Messiah in 1996

*Messiah:*The Wordbook

You can own a facsimile of Handel's original 1743 wordbook for *Messiah*. Published by H&H, and with an introduction by Christopher Hogwood, *Messiah: The Wordbook* is a limited-edition publication by the Stinehour Press.

It makes a special gift for music lovers.

The wordbook is available at the H&H BOUTIQUE in the lobby, or at the H&H administrative offices in Horticultural Hall, 300 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston.

H&H gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Elmar Seibel and *ars libri* in the production of this wordbook.

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- Aldous Huxley

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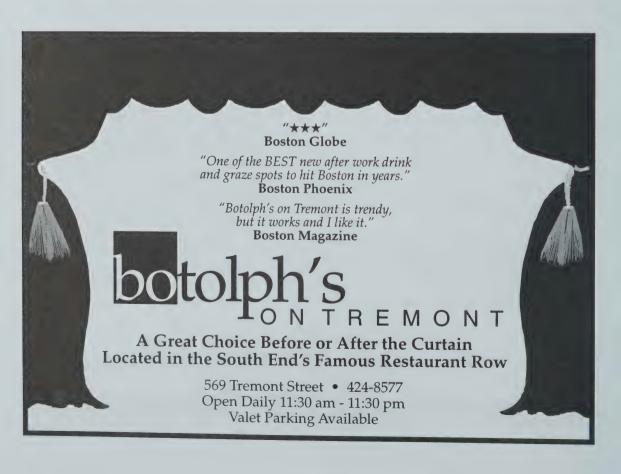


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Alison Arnett, Boston Globe Calendar, October 31, 1996

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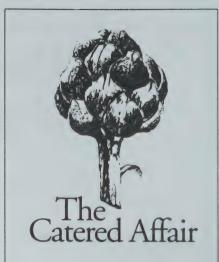
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